

To,
Instructional Quality Commission,
History-Social Science SMC
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RE: Chinese New Year and Tết

I am writing to support the input of Chinese and East Asian community to recognize the Chinese New Year and Tết. No doubt this is a major celebration in the world and in an increasingly culturally diverse California, the California curriculum needs to recognize more world holidays not just European ones as it does now.

I am wholeheartedly and unequivocally supporting the inclusion of Chinese New Year and Tết in the California curriculum. It is important for children of California to know of this important celebration. **It is also important for children of California to be educated about existence of various lunar calendars and their significance even in the present day Asia.**

There is however a problem in the proposed label for it of “Asian Lunar New Year”. While I understand the intent to pick this label is well intentioned: to be inclusive to larger group of cultures from East Asia, this label is misleading and wrongs more people than it includes for the following reasons:

1. It promotes the factually incorrect notion that there is only one Lunar calendar and one Lunar New Year in Asia.
2. **Asia has in fact multiple lunar calendars and each one having its own different New Year day.** Sometimes different cultures use the same calendar but have different starting points (New Year days). India alone has about half a dozen lunar calendars. **The day after Diwali and Ugadi being couple major Lunar New Year celebrations celebrated in India.**
3. Chinese New Year and Tết are not celebrations from West Asia (including middle-east), Central Asia, North Asia (including Russia) and South Asia. For the most part this is a celebration from only East Asia (China, Vietnam and various other surrounding countries). I would say it is safe to argue that this celebration is **not native to at least half of Asia.**
4. Calling this important festival ‘Asian Lunar New Year’ misleads California children to think that this is a celebration of most people in Asia. California children need good international cultural education and not misleading information.

Hence I suggest the celebration be included with a better name found for it if 'Chinese New Year (and Tết)' is found lacking for some reason. I feel it is best to call it Chinese New Year as that recognizes the spread and influence of Chinese culture in East Asia through adoption of the Chinese calendar. If however a more inclusive name is desired, perhaps 'East Asian Lunar New Year' or a more accurate and correct name like that may be adopted for it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tushar Pandya